

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 SSC-01 NEAE-00 PRS-01 /046 W

-----131453Z 055154 /50

P R 131322Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3639

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, LE

SUBJECT: SEVERAL NEW HIGH-LEVEL GOL APPOINTMENTS

1. SUMMARY. FOLLOWING ITS MEETING ON APR 11, THE GOL COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ANNOUNCED A NUMBER OF KEY APPOINTMENTS. MOST IMPORTANT, COLONEL AHMED AL HAJJ HAS BEEN NAMED DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES, REPLACING HISHAM SHAAR, WHO HAS ACCOMPLISHED LITTLE, SUGGESTING A NEW EFFORT TO RESTORE LEBANON'S POLICE FORCES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE FOLLOWING NEW APPOINTMENTS TO IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT POSITIONS WERE ANNOUNCED FOLLOWING A CABINET MEETING ON APR 11 WHICH LASTED FIVE HOURS AND WAS PRESIDED OVER BY PRESIDENT SARKIS.

A. COL. AHMED AL HAJJ, FORMER COMMANDER OF THE ARAB SECURITY FORCE, TO BE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES, REPLACING HISHAM SHAAR.

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B. HISHAM SHAAR TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL INSPECTION BOARD.

C. LT. COL. SAMI KHATIB TO BE COMMANDER OF THE ARAB SECURITY FORCE, REPLACING HAJJ. KHATIB WAS ALSO PROMOTED TO FULL COLONEL.

D. COL. ANTOINE DAHDAAH, FORMER DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PUBLIC SECURITY, TO BE AN AMBASSADOR (POST UNSPECIFIED).

E. FAROUQ ABI LAMEH TO BE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF PUBLIC SECURITY (SURETE GENERALE), REPLACING DAHDAAH. LEMEH IS A FRENCH-EDUCATED LAWYER AND THE SON OF A FORMER MINISTER. HE IS A CLOSE PERSONAL FRIEND OF PRESIDENT SARKIS AND HAS THE REPUTATION OF BEING ONE OF THE BEST CARD PLAYERS IN LEBANON.

F. DR. KHATTAR CHEBLI TO BE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FINANCE. CHEBLI IS ALSO A FRENCH-EDUCATED LAWYER, WITH A DEGREE IN FINANCE, WHO HAS SERVED IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT POSTS IN THIS MINISTRY.

G. DR. GEORGE SLAIBI TO BE DIRECTOR OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION. SLAIBI IS A CAREER CIVIL SERVANT IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION.

3. COMMENT: THE REALITY OF SYRIAN CONTROL OF THE ASF MEANS THE JOB OF LEBANESE "COMMANDER" THEREOF IS OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE. COL. AL HAJJ AS NEW HEAD OF THE ISF TAKES ON A JOB WHERE HE CAN BETTER USE HIS WIDELY RESPECTED MILITARY STAFF SKILLS. COL. KHATIB WAS A KEY MAN IN PRESIDENT CHEHAB'S G-2, IS ANATHEMA TO THE CHAMOUN CAMP, AND HAS BEEN IN THE POLITICAL WILDERNESS FOR YEARS, BUT IS ON GOOD TERMS

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WITH THE SYRIANS. HE MAY THEREFORE BE A GOOD CHOICE FOR THE ASF NON-JOB. THIS APPOINTMENT MAY BEGIN HIS REHABILITATION, AND LEAD TO OTHER TOP JOBS IN THE FUTURE. HISHAM SHAAR HAS BEEN GIVEN A NON-JOB, WHERE HIS INEFFECTIVENESS WILL BE LESS DETRIMENTAL, BUT HE WILL BE ON THE PAYROLL AS A SOP TO HIS PATRON, FORMER PRESIDENT FRANGIE. THE OTHER APPOINTEES HAVE THE COMMON ATTRIBUTES OF BEING FORMER CHEHABISTS AND PERSONAL FRIENDS OF ELIAS SARKIS. THE MOST DUBIOUS APPOINTMENT IS THAT OF FAROUQ ABI LAMEH, WHO HAS AN EXCELLENT REPUTATION AS A LAWYER, BUT HAS NO GOVERNMENTAL EXPERIENCE -- AN INAUSPICIOUS BACKGROUND FOR SOMEONE WHO WILL HAVE TO DOMINATE THE JUNGLE OF LEBANESE INTERNAL SECURITY POLITICS IF HE IS TO SUCCEED. WITH HAJJ AT THE HEAD OF THE ISF, THE TRADITIONAL PRIMACY OF THE SURETE GENERALE MAY BEGIN TO GIVE WAY TO THE ISF.

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
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